

high vitamin and acid ash diet. Prostatic hypertrophy is soundly dealt with but the concluding account of tumours is all too brief. The illustrations are plentiful and excellent.

R. H. B.

Microbial Growth and its Inhibition. World Health Organization Monograph Series No. 10. 1952. Pp. 285. H.M.S.O., London. (15s.)

This monograph contains eighteen papers presented at the First International Symposium on Chemical Microbiology held in Rome in 1951. Some deal with the technological aspects of antibiotic production whilst the others are short reviews of a wide range of subjects by leading authorities. Among papers of immediate interest to venereologists are those on drug resistance, microbial resistance to streptomycin, biological standardization of antibiotics, physiological background to microbial inhibition, and antibiotics active against fungi, including monilia.

Venereologists owe an especial debt for the range of antibiotics which workers in the field of chemical microbiology have put at their disposal. The papers in this monograph will amply repay study by those whose interest in their therapeutic weapons goes beyond immediate practical applications; in these articles they will find most useful surveys of some of the "growing points" of this new branch of microbiology.

A. E. W.

Controlled Parenthood. By R. H. Boyd. 5th ed., 1952. Pp. 68. Heinemann, London. (5s.)

The preface to this booklet states that it is a practical guide in contraception for the intelligent lay public. The fact that it has passed through five editions and one reprint since 1944 is an indication of its popularity.

The keynote of the book is its practical nature. It is clearly written and is illustrated by simple diagrams which are easy to follow. The medical and social indications for contraception are given and the methods available are well described and evaluated.

There is a short section on the prophylaxis of venereal disease. While the value of soap and water in the prevention of venereal infection is rightly stressed, the reviewer feels that the author has gone a little beyond his brief in advocating the use of sulphathiazole cream for the prevention of gonorrhoea and chancroid in a book designed for lay readers, apart from the possibility that its use might produce skin sensitisation in susceptible subjects.

The author is to be congratulated on his clear presentation of a difficult subject in an objective manner well suited for non-medical readers.

A. E. W.

The Clinical Application of Antibiotics: Penicillin. By M. E. Florey. 1952. Pp. 730, 115 illus., 98 tab. Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. (84s.)

The subject matter of this book is divided into three main parts. The first briefly reviews the properties

of penicillin which are of clinical importance, the conditions which may complicate treatment with the drug, and the dosage and methods of administration. The second part deals with the place of penicillin in the treatment of diseases due to specific organisms. The third part describes particular affections for which this remedy has been employed. There can be no doubt that the author undertook a formidable task; and equally no doubt that it has been well done. The preface states that the literature on antibiotics is now so great that no one person can read it all critically, and the author disclaims any suggestion that the references are fully comprehensive. Nevertheless she has succeeded in producing a very readable review based on careful and critical selection from the literature contributing to knowledge of the subject. The text consists of a careful series of deductions based on this study, references to the sources of information being given either in the text itself or in the footnotes to each section. Full details of the references are given in the comprehensive bibliography at the end of the book. There is the inevitable drawback of such a review that the time lag in publication is such that the material can never be quite up-to-date; but the author claims that there are references to most publications on penicillin up to the end of 1949 and that it has been possible to include, mainly in footnotes, references to those articles appearing in 1950 which manifestly threw fresh light on the subject. All the special subjects are faithfully considered and, though it is difficult to select any chapter of the book for special praise, that which deals with battle casualties is particularly well done.

Readers of this Journal, whose interests may well be primarily in the field of venereology, may feel that the amount of space which has been allotted to the subject, namely 64 pages, is small in relation to the vast amount of work which has been done and the very notable change in the subject which has resulted from the introduction of penicillin. Nevertheless, truth compels the admission that no major fault could be found in the quality and accuracy of this section and the literature has been faithfully reported. Since the author acts only as reporter and does not pretend to give expert views on specialized subjects, the literature must be held to blame for the conclusion that the results of so-called "prophylactic treatment" of syphilis are "very encouraging", and for the fact that no reference is made to the cogent arguments which contend that abortive treatment of this kind has serious dangers and is not lightly to be recommended.

The book contains no less than 115 illustrations and 98 tables and is carefully indexed both for subjects and authors. Proof reading has been highly efficient and this reviewer was able to find only one printer's error—the spelling of the word "consensus" as "concensus". Either for study or for reference the book has excellent qualities for all who are concerned with the use of penicillin, both as a provider of information and as a saver of labour.

A. J. K.